

# NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Nov. 4, 2011

## **Stand Down to give Homeless Veterans help with VA, Community Services *More than 200 Volunteers Needed***

**OMAHA**, Neb. — Homeless Veterans can come in from the cold to get assistance and a hot meal at a “Stand Down” at the Omaha Civic Center, Exhibit Hall, Nov. 19 from 9 a.m. to noon.

The Department of Veterans Affairs Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (NWIHCS) will provide free services for homeless Veterans including health screening, eye exams, drug and alcohol counseling, mental health services and foot care. In addition, the Veterans can also receive limited free clothing and a hot meal.

Veterans are encouraged to enroll for VA health care benefits before the event at the Omaha VA Medical Center, 4101 Woolworth Ave. However, Veterans who are not enrolled for VA health care benefits can register Nov. 19 and receive information about the available services.

More than 200 volunteers are needed to escort the Veterans through the myriad stations at the event. Volunteers must be 15 years or older. To volunteer, call Keri at (402) 995-4388.

In addition to the VA, representatives from the following community agencies will be present to assist homeless Veterans: county Veteran service offices, the Omaha Vet Center, Nebraska Workforce Development, the Salvation Army, Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs, Lions Club, and the Omaha G.I. Forum. Veterans can also meet with representatives from the VA to discuss disability benefits that may be available to them.

Stand Down is a military term that means service members are removed from the combat field to receive rest and rehabilitation. It is one of many opportunities for the VA to reach out and connect with homeless Veterans to provide them much-needed rest and rehabilitation.

Donations of clothing are still being accepted. Clothing must be new, and includes coats, hats and scarves. To donate, call VA Voluntary Services at (402) 995-3283.

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## VA STAND DOWN-2/2/2/2

“Our Veterans honorably served America. This is our opportunity to serve them,” said Linda Twomey, VA NWIHCS Mental Health Specialty Programs Coordinator. “The Stand Down is one of the VA’s many programs to reach out and serve homeless Veterans in our communities.”

The VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System’s mission is to honor America’s Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being. VA NWIHCS employees serve more than 161,000 Veterans in Nebraska, western Iowa and portions of Kansas and Missouri. The system includes a tertiary medical center in Omaha and a Community Living Center in Grand Island, Neb. Community-based outpatient clinics are located in Lincoln, Grand Island, North Platte, Norfolk, and Bellevue, Neb., and Shenandoah, Iowa; and a contract outreach clinic in O’Neill, Neb. For more information, visit <http://www.nebraska.va.gov>.

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